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PTO/SB/21 (08-00)

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|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| <b>TRANSMITTAL FORM</b><br><br>(to be used for all correspondence after initial filing) | <b>Application Number</b>   | 09/757,138                    |        |
|   | <b>Filing Date</b>          | January 9, 2001               |        |
|   | <b>First Named Inventor</b> | Chad C. Smutney               |        |
|   | <b>Group Art Unit</b>       |                               |        |
|   | <b>Examiner Name</b>        |                               |        |
| <b>Total Number of Pages in This Submission</b>   | 3*                          | <b>Attorney Docket Number</b> | P-1656 |

| ENCLOSURES (check all that apply)   |   |  |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Fee Transmittal Form                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment Papers (for an Application)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> After Allowance Communication to Group                            |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Extension of Time Request                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney, Revocation Change of Correspondence Address | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Enclosure(s) (please identify below):            |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts/ Incomplete Application      | <b>Remarks</b>  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts under 37 CFR 1.52 or 1.53    | *The total number of pages in this submission does not include the references.          |  |

| SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Firm or Individual name                    | Frederick A. Spaeth        |
| Signature                                  | <i>Frederick A. Spaeth</i> |
| Date                                       | March 20, 2001             |

| CERTIFICATE OF MAILING  |                            |      |                |
|---|----------------------------|------|----------------|
| I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231 on this date: 03/20/01 |                            |      |                |
| Typed or printed name   | Michelle E. Fetzner        |      |                |
| Signature   | <i>Michelle E. Fetzner</i> | Date | March 20, 2001 |

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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

APPLICANTS: Chad C. Smutney et al : GROUP ART UNIT:  
SERIAL NO: 09/757,138 :  
FILING DATE: January 9, 2001 : EXAMINER:  
TITLE: Blunable Needle Assembly With :  
Open-Ended Blunting Probe : ATTY DKT: P-1656

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**LETTER ACCOMPANYING  
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT  
SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO 37 CFR 1.97(b)**

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

March 20, 2001

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to 37 CFR 1.97(b), the Applicants herewith disclose for consideration in the above-captioned patent application the documents listed on the enclosed form PTO-1449, copies of which documents are enclosed therewith.

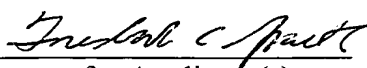
The enclosed Statement is being submitted within three months of the filing date of the above-captioned application so the items submitted therewith should therefore be considered without necessity of a certification, petition or fee.

The filing of the enclosed Statement shall not be construed: as a representation that a search has been made (37 CFR 1.97(g)), nor as an admission that the information cited is, or is considered to be, material to patentability, nor as a representation that no other information material to patentability exists, nor as an admission that the information cited is entitled to prior art status relative to the above-captioned application, nor as an admission against interest in any manner.

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Respectfully submitted,

  
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